

BALTIMORE REGIONAL FAIR HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2/19/13

Overall Highlights

- Table below adds at least one shaded implementation row for each Fair Housing Action Plan item.
- Year columns at right provide basic timeline for action and identify priorities for each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).
- Expected outcomes highlighted in each implementation row.
- Implementation plan integrates a number of notable efforts:
 - Current regional coordination of fair housing efforts funded by The Opportunity Collaborative and local governments and housed at the Baltimore Metropolitan Council.
 - Fair housing education events for elected officials and housing professionals throughout time frame
 - Joint fundraising efforts with other key fair housing constituencies to support plan implementation and ideally continue regional fair housing coordination beyond Opportunity Collaborative
 - Convening the region's public housing authorities to improve coordination, develop joint plans, and implement relevant AI action steps
 - Fostering regular opportunities for stakeholder interaction and coordination of fair housing and transportation planning through Opportunity Collaborative time period and beyond.

Contact with questions:

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Detailed Table

Action Plan Steps and (shaded) Implementation Measures & Expected Outcomes	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
a. Actions to preserve the supply of affordable rental housing for families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. On a regional basis, support a replacement policy that encourages the region to work together to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserve the number of affordable housing units available by replacing vacant units or creating equivalent units in opportunity areas whenever economically feasible, and/or 2. Provide housing choice vouchers, subject to funding availability, relocation assistance and mobility counseling for displaced families within the region. 					
Meet with public housing authorities in the region to develop joint strategies to carry out step above. Expected outcome: Replacement policy informed by financial realities in place by FY 2015.	•	•	•		
b. Actions to expand the supply of affordable rental housing for families in opportunity areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Encourage the State of Maryland to revise its QAP and other vehicles for affordable housing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a set-aside for tax credit projects in opportunity areas of the Baltimore region 2. Give preference to family units in opportunity neighborhoods 3. Eliminate local approval requirements, and 4. Create incentives for scattered site tax credit projects. 					
Submit written comments and follow-up in FY 2013 with consultant helping Maryland Dept. of Housing & Community Development revise its Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). Work with other coalitions and groups as needed afterwards to promote these changes. Expected outcome: Policies implemented through revised QAP as applicable.	•	•	•	•	•
Explore with MD DHCD opportunities in other DHCD affordable housing vehicles (e.g. Rental Housing Works, Partnership Rental Housing Program, Sustainable Communities designation) for implementing these actions. Expected outcome: Policy revisions in other programs as applicable		•	•		
c. Actions to educate elected officials on affirmatively furthering fair housing.					
i. Work with HUD, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, BMC or all three to conduct AFFH workshops for elected officials of the participating jurisdictions.					
Organize workshops at Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) conferences or other appropriate venues on local government legal obligations to affirmatively further fair housing. Expected outcome: Elected officials and/or local government attorneys from region participate in each session.		•		•	

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Invite elected officials and local government attorneys and other key staff to periodic conferences on fair housing. Expected outcome: Elected officials and/or local government attorneys attend each conference.	•		•		
d. Actions to expand the supply of accessible and affordable housing:					
i. Determine the unmet need for affordable, accessible housing for persons with mobility impairments in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area.					
Work with Opportunity Collaborative housing plan consultant, other experts, and advocates to determine unmet need. (The Opportunity Collaborative is new name of the Baltimore Sustainable Communities Initiative, a consortium of government and nonprofit organizations funded by a planning grant from the U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development.) Include survey of landlords regarding supply, if necessary. Expected outcome: Unmet need determined by FY 2014.	•	•			
ii. Take steps to address the identified unmet need for affordable, accessible housing for persons with mobility or sensory impairments in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area, which may include increasing the percentage of newly constructed rental housing units that must be made accessible for wheelchair users in accordance with the governing standards in place, and/or requiring that some percentage of newly constructed residential units meet universal design standards.					
Encourage State of Maryland through QAP process to increase newly constructed accessible rental housing units. Expected outcome: QAP percentage for accessible units will be increased.	•				
Consider urging adjustments to current Maryland law requiring a higher percentage of newly constructed or rehabilitated units to be accessible, or a new requirement for universal design standards. Expected outcomes: Consideration of new standard; urge potential changes if needed.	•	•	•		
iii. Sponsor informational and education sessions for those local jurisdictions in the region that do not have inclusionary zoning laws. The sessions would focus on using such legislation to require that a percentage of all newly constructed housing units be affordable to low and moderate income households, and on tools that may be used as incentives to create affordable housing, such as public infrastructure subsidies, density bonuses and tax increment financing.					
Organize educational events with the goal of encouraging additional jurisdictions to consider inclusionary zoning laws. Each will combine a local tour of existing inclusionary zoning homes and a roundtable discussion on latest information and tools to achieve more inclusionary zoning. Expected outcome: Two events that include a tour and roundtable discussions attended by representatives from each jurisdiction in the region.		•	•		

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iv. Convene a meeting with the State of Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, which already maintains a database of apartments and identifies units that are wheelchair accessible, to discuss steps that may be taken that will result in more landlords listing their units in the State database, especially landlords with units that are accessible or have accessible features. Such steps may include, but not be limited to, conducting regional outreach and education to property managers on the importance of submitting information regarding accessible units to the database. Explore how the database may be improved and/or linked to services like socialservice.com.					
Work with Maryland DHCD and potentially other stakeholders, such as the Maryland Multi-Housing Association, to increase online information for affordable rental homes with accessible features. Expected outcome: Joint plan with DHCD and possibly others by FY 2014 to include MdHousingSearch.org and/or popular private-sector rental sites like Apartments.com and Rent.com. Plan implemented by FY 2015.	•	•	•		
e. Organizational strategies for inter-jurisdictional cooperation and collaboration relative to fair housing:					
i. Formalize the regional efforts to address fair housing issues through a formal memorandum of understanding (“MOU”), entered into by Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford and Howard Counties and Baltimore City (the “Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group” or the “Group”). Pursuant to the MOU, each jurisdiction would address the regional issues by committing staff time to meet on a regular basis and financial resources, as available, such as local entitlement funds, competitive FHIP funds, and Sustainable Communities Initiative planning funds to carry out regional actions to address fair housing impediments. Funds received would be made available for uniform fair housing testing, education and outreach throughout the region.					
Sign MOU pledging local CDBG housing funds toward coordinator position and to work together to carry out the steps in this Fair Housing Action Plan. Representatives of Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group meet at least every other month to coordinate on carrying out this plan. Outcome: MOU signed and staff hired in calendar year 2012, work under way and regular meetings occurring.	•	•	•	•	•

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Establish fundraising subcommittee with Realtors, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, and Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. Seek funds to conduct education and outreach and to continue coordinated work beyond Opportunity Collaborative grant. Support organizations applying for grants that would move region toward uniform fair housing testing. Expected outcomes: Coordinate one- or multi-year FHIP grant application in 2013. Carry out program if grant received. Support private enforcement applications that fill in gaps in testing regionally. Aggressively seek funding to sustain coordinated regional work for 2015 and thereafter.	•	•	•	•	•
ii. The Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group will set goals each year and establish a schedule, which prioritizes the action steps recommended under this plan and articulates the scope of work and expected outcomes for each action. The Group's regional accomplishments will be reported in each participating jurisdiction's CAPER.					
Conduct three focus groups with fair housing stakeholders and develop year-by-year Implementation Plan for Fair Housing Action Plan. Expected outcome: Implementation plan, including schedule and expected outcomes, completed by early calendar year 2013.	•	•			
Starting in FY 2014, update Implementation Plan each year to be more specific as progress is made. Expected outcome: Updated Implementation Plan each year starting in FY 2014, noting past progress and making expected outcomes more specific where possible.		•	•	•	•
Use Implementation Plan to inform local Annual Plans and to report progress through Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPERs). Expected outcomes: Elements of this plan included in local Annual Plans; progress reported in local CAPERs each year.	•	•	•	•	•
iii. The Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group will work to establish routine interaction and cooperation among the Baltimore Metropolitan Council ("BMC"), fair housing advocates, the entity implementing the mobility program established pursuant to the Thompson partial consent decree, transportation agencies, planning and zoning officials and other interested parties regarding the implementation of the regional AI.					
Recruit stakeholders above into Opportunity Collaborative consortium (if they are not already members) and Housing Committee. Include Action Plan progress update in each Housing Committee meeting, and use Housing Committee as the primary forum for interaction and cooperative dialogue among these stakeholders. Expected outcome: Opportunity Collaborative Housing Committee meetings become routine opportunities for interaction and cooperation among stakeholders regarding implementation of Fair Housing Action Plan.	•	•	•		

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Through Opportunity Collaborative process, develop and implement a plan for continued interaction beyond the federal Sustainable Communities Grant: Expected outcome: Continued routine opportunities for interaction and cooperation among stakeholders.			•	•	•
iv. Examine the Section 8 porting procedures of each jurisdiction and, to the extent they are inconsistent, make them consistent. Work with HUD to convene a meeting to discuss porting procedures and regional cooperation. Request additional financial assistance from HUD to allow jurisdictions to implement increased payment standards to encourage moves to opportunity areas. If HUD provides the requested financial assistance, implement the increased payment standards.					
Convene public housing authorities (PHAs) in the region to discuss porting procedures and ways to remove obstacles to porting vouchers. Expected outcome: Identified obstacles within local purview removed by FY 2015.	•	•	•		
With input from PHAs and Opportunity Collaborative Housing Committee, research best practices in regional voucher cooperation, including examples in Chicago and Philadelphia. Expected outcome: Dialogue with PHAs and Housing Committee on what we can potentially learn from other metropolitan areas. Results of research shared with PHAs and Housing Committee.	•	•			
Work with PHAs to convene meeting with HUD on porting procedures and regional cooperation. Expected outcome: At least one joint meeting leading to joint action items to improve porting and cooperation.		•			
Request financial assistance from HUD to allow jurisdictions to implement increased payment standards to encourage moves to opportunity areas. Expected outcome: Request for financial assistance for increased payment standards submitted to HUD, and, if HUD approves the request, implementation of the HUD-approved increased payment standards.		•	•		
f. Actions to encourage the inclusion of public transportation in opportunity areas of the region:					
i. Encourage entities engaged in transportation planning to involve housing agencies, housing advocates and developers of affordable housing in their planning and policy development processes, including obtaining their comments on specific programs, initiatives and policies released by local, state and federal transportation agencies and on funding strategies.					
ii. Encourage coordination between transportation and housing agencies to more effectively align housing and transportation investments and resources and to reflect both state and federal policies that are requiring more integrated approaches to community revitalization and development.					

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<p>Work with MTA, local transit agencies, state transit-oriented development officials, and any relevant others to conduct informational discussions with local housing agencies, housing advocates, and developers of affordable housing on transit planning, funding, and policy development processes. Include in sessions information on route and schedule planning cycles for MTA and local transit agencies, yearly capital and operating budget schedule, federally-required regional planning processes, policy-setting processes, and legislative agenda development schedules. Also include information on fair housing for transportation planners and agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hold discussions with local housing agencies in five local HUD entitlement jurisdictions, in conjunction with any local transportation or transit agency/staff. Expected outcome: Initial discussions with five local jurisdictions attended by local housing staff and local and state and transportation staff persons. ○ Hold discussions with advocates and affordable housing developers in conjunction with relevant associations, such as the Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition, ABCD Network, and Baltimore Regional Housing Campaign. Expected outcome: Three initial discussions attended by advocates and affordable housing developers. 	•				
Through discussions, compile list of interested housing agencies, advocates and developers and submit to relevant transportation planning agencies, such as MTA, Md. Dept. of Transportation (MDOT), and BMC, for notice of opportunities to be involved in and/or comment on planning processes and policy development. Expected outcome: Participation by housing stakeholders not previously included in transportation planning and policy development processes.	•	•	•	•	•
Follow initial discussions with routine interaction and cooperation described under e.iii. above. Same expected outcomes through Opportunity Collaborative process and beyond.	•	•	•	•	•
iii. Encourage MTA to create a bus line that circles the Baltimore beltway and includes multiple stops.					
iv. Encourage MTA to review public transportation routes to ensure that:					
1. Service is provided between residential opportunity areas and areas of employment opportunity and job growth for both first shift and second shift workers					
2. Service is provided between affordable housing resources and areas of employment opportunity and job growth for both first shift and second shift workers					
3. Service is provided between residential opportunity areas and educational institutions and health care facilities, and					
4. The various transportation systems are connected in order for riders to move easily from one system to another.					

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Formally make recommendations above to MTA. Expected outcome: Letter from Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group to MTA with recommendations above by early 2013. Follow-up with MTA on recommendations thereafter.	•	•	•	•	•
Follow letter above with trainings described under f.i. and ii. and routine interaction described in e.iii. to foster productive dialogue between housing stakeholders and MTA. Explore leveraging the Opportunity Collaborative for public engagement around the fair housing, environmental, and public health benefits of public transportation. Expected outcome: Better common understanding of fair housing issues and transportation among MTA planners, housing stakeholders, and the public, leading to greater collaboration and integration of regional transit network with regional fair housing goals.	•	•	•	•	•
v. Encourage the State to include affordable housing as part of the requirements at sites designated as either a Smart Site or Transit Oriented Development (TOD) site.					
Include State Smart Site and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) officials in local trainings and routine interaction opportunities described above in f. i. and ii. Submit to State recommendations emerging from these discussions, such as ensuring quality affordable housing at both high-opportunity sites and currently low-opportunity sites targeted for investment. Expected outcome: Recommendations regarding affordable housing requirements at TOD and Smart Sites from these interactions provided to the State by FY 2015.	•	•	•		
vi. Pursue HUD and MD-DHCD Sustainable Communities opportunities, which will include:					
1. Working with BMC on responding to Sustainable Communities NOFAs, and					
2. Seeking funds to create a regional housing strategy, which would include funds for staff and a study to develop regional funding mechanisms.					
BMC received HUD Sustainable Communities grant, including funds to create a Regional Housing Plan, hire a staff coordinator for this Action Plan, and explore regional funding mechanisms. Outcomes: Grant received; housing policy coordinator hired.	•				
Regional Housing Plan created through Baltimore Opportunity Collaborative as part of its Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. Expected Outcome: Housing Plan finalized by early 2015; implemented thereafter	•	•	•	•	•
Pursue any available and fair housing-related HUD Sustainable Communities implementation grants following current planning grant. Expected outcome: Baltimore region proposal submitted if HUD Sustainable Communities implementation funds become available in 2014 or later.		•	•	•	•

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g. Legislative actions					
i. Advocate for the adoption of a statewide law that would include source of income as a class protected from discrimination.					
Submit testimony and testify on source-of-income legislation that is introduced in Maryland General Assembly. Expected outcome: Advocacy for a state law that adds people with source of income such as housing choice voucher as class protected from housing discrimination.	•	•	•	•	•
h. Education and Outreach					
i. Continue to hold routine regional education events on fair housing issues, especially as a means by which to educate housing professionals on relevant fair housing issues.					
Hold educational event with author Antero Pietila (<i>Not in My Neighborhood</i>), HUD, and advocates. Expected outcome: 150 people attended December 2012 event, expanding our list of potential fair housing stakeholders.	•				
Use transportation-related trainings (f. i-ii. above) and inclusionary zoning tours and roundtable discussions (d.iii. above) as opportunities to educate housing professionals on fair housing issues. Same expected outcomes as in f.i-ii. (training in each of five local jurisdictions and three trainings for advocates and affordable housing developers) and d.iii (two events combining a tour and roundtable discussion).	•	•	•		
Work with partners such as the Realtors, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, and Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. to develop schedule of educational events that relate to current fair housing issues in region. Expected outcome: Routine events attended by advocates, members of the community and housing professionals.		•	•	•	•
ii. Develop a brochure, to be distributed regionally and placed on each jurisdiction's website, and a training program to educate multi-family property managers and landlords, especially those that operate in multiple jurisdictions, and real estate agents on the different fair housing ordinances and their applicability across the region. Use the Howard County training package and agreement with the Howard County Association of Realtors as a model.					
Work with partners such as the Realtors, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, and Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. to develop training program and educational brochure. Expected outcomes: Training program developed and brochure posted.	•	•			
Work with partners to conduct regular training program. Expected outcome: At least one training per year attended by property managers, landlords, and real estate agents.		•	•	•	•